TRIBAL ART SOCIETY

Tuesday
April 1st
2025

**ONLINE CATALOGUE LXXXXVII**

# APRIL ISSUE

## WHO WE ARE

The Tribal Art Society features an online catalogue every month listing quality works of Tribal art that have been thoroughly vetted by our select members, who are the in-house experts.

By bringing together a group of trusted dealers specializing in Tribal art, our platform offers a unique collection of works of art that collectors will not find anywhere else online. To ensure the highest standards, gallery membership is by invitation only and determined by a selection committee.


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/TribalArtSociety

**Cover Image:** Dogon horse rider sculpture. Presented by David Serra on p. 64

# APRIL ARTWORKS

Pieces are published and changed each month. The objects are presented with a full description and corresponding dealer's contact information. Unlike auction sites or other platforms, we empower collectors to interact directly with the member dealers for enquiries and purchases by clicking on the e-mail adress.

In order to guarantee the quality of pieces available in the catalogues, objects are systematically validated by all our select mebers, who are the in-house experts. Collectors are therefore encouraged to decide and buy with complete confidence. In addition to this, the Tribal Art Society proposes a seven-day full money back return policy should the buyer not feel totally satisfied with a purchase.

Feel free to ask the price if the artwork is listed with a price on request.

# 01

## BAULE SCULPTURE

*Asie usu* sculpture
Baule
Ivory Coast
Early 20th century
Wood
Height: 34,5 cm
Provenance:
G.F. Scanzi (1936-2017), Italy
Publications:
Expo. Cat.: Scanzi, G.F. La statuaire akan. Ed. Tribalglobale
Primary Art. Italie 2010, p. 297, nº 195.
Price: 8.000 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**
David Serra
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Similar style sculpture:
François Neyt,. *Trésors de Côte d'Ivoire*. Fonds Mercator. Bruxelles, 2014, p.253. nº 182.

# 02

## BWA PLANK MASK

Nwantanty Plank mask
Bwa
Burkina Faso
Height: 82cm
Provenance:
Ex Thomas G.B. Wheelock, NY
Ex Alain Dufour, Saint-Maur, France
Published in:
Masques du Burkina Faso, 1995, plate #36
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**
Mark Eglinton
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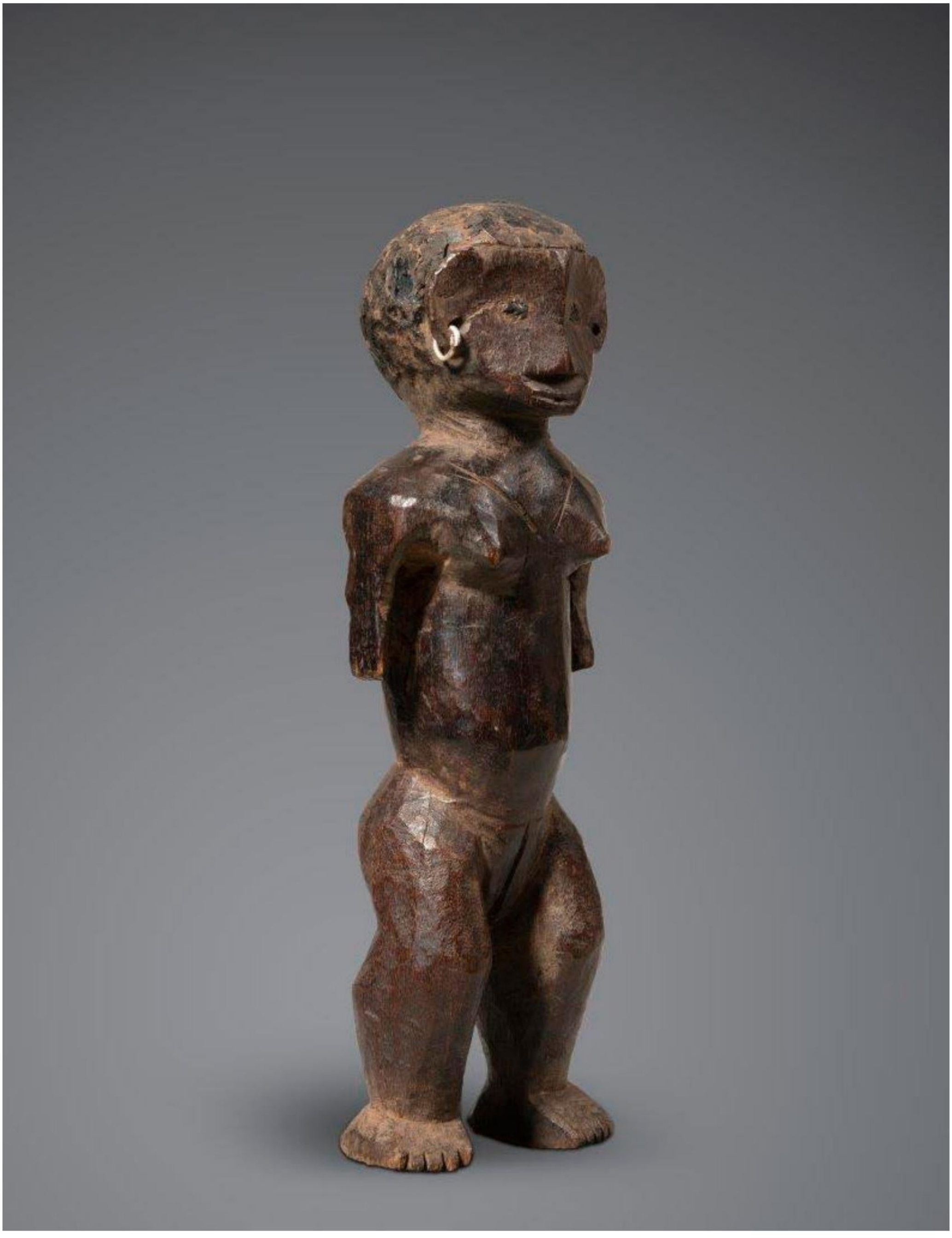

# 03

## BWAKA FIGURE

Figure
Bwaka  D.R. of Congo
Wood
Height: 29 cm
Provenance:
Dutch private collection
Price: 2500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**
Joaquin Pecci
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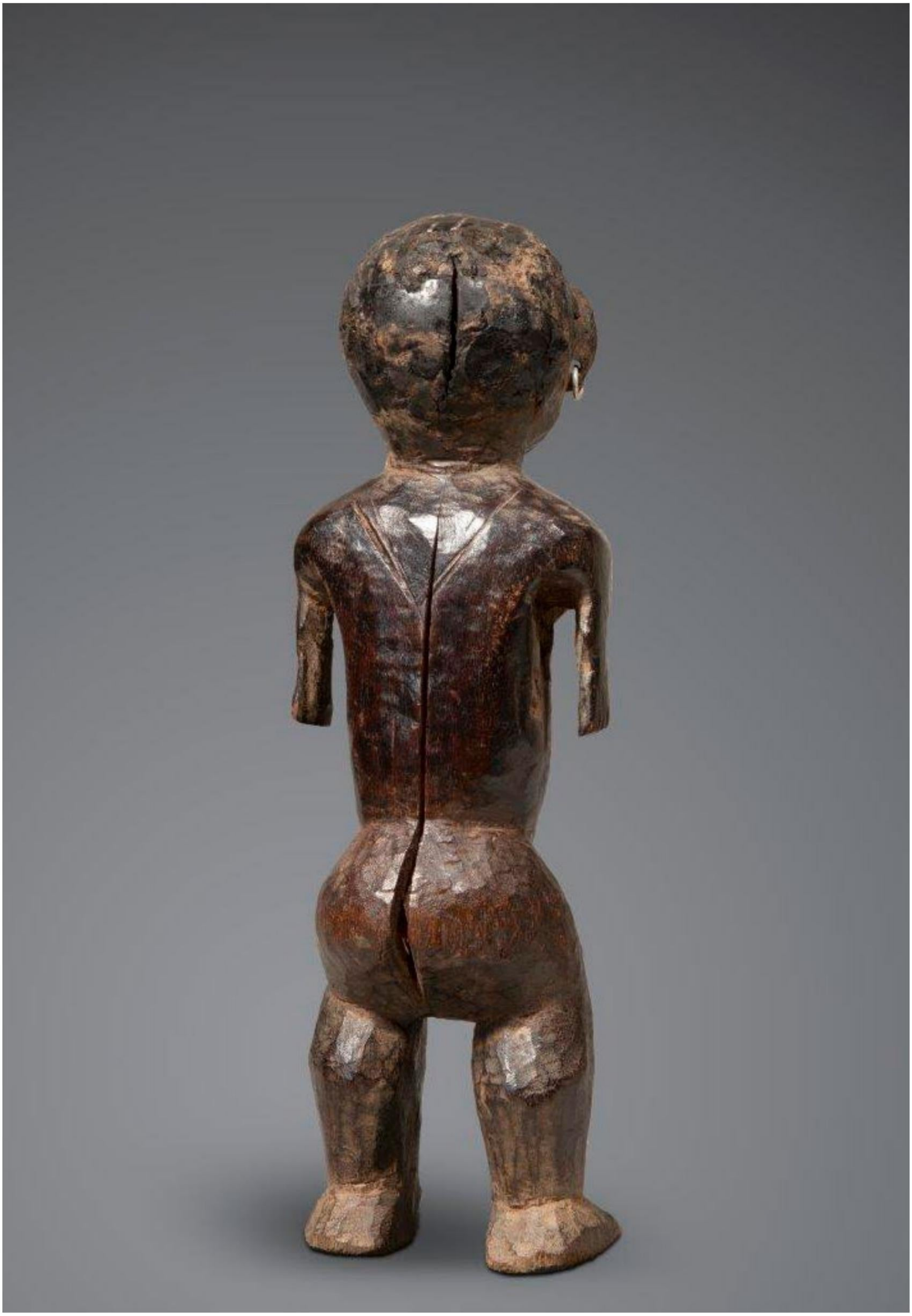
W.: www.joaquinpecci.net



# 04

## DAYAK GUARDIANS

Pair of Rice Paddy Guardians
Dayak People
Borneo
Hardwood
13, 75 x 12 in (35 x 30, 5 cm)
Price on request

A pair of spirit figures with ancestor overtones, known to protect the growing rice plant, padi, in the field, *sawah*.

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**
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# 05

## ESKIMO SEAL FIGURE

Shamanic amulet / ornament
Thule Culture – Ancient Eskimo
Alaska
18th century or earlier
Carved walrus tooth
Length: 2,5 cm
Provenance:
Collection Anthony JP Meyer, Paris
Private collection, France, acquired from the above
Price: 1.900 euros

According to Fitzhugh et Kaplan (see *Inua: Spirit World of the Bering Sea Eskimo*, 1982 page156), these shamanic figurines were carved for several purposes: to stand in for people absent from the village during festivals, to avert infertility, or else to focus the attention of animal inua (spirit) during the Doll Festival, which was held to bless hunting and fishing expeditions in the coming year.

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# 06

## FANG KNIFE

Knife
Fang
Gabon
Wood, metal and brass
Height: 51cm
Provenance:
Ex Jeff Hobbs, Wellington, NZ
Ex Robert Bourden collection,
Sheridan, WY
Ex Merton Simpson, NYC, inv#. 6969
Ex Marceau Riviera, Paris
Price on request

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# 07

## KONGO-SUNDI BANGLE

A rare bronze bangle
Kongo-Sundi, Congo
Circa 1900 or earlier
Bronze
Diam.: 9,5 cm
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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# 08

## MAKAH HOOK

A large bentwood halibut hook
Makah
North West Coast
19th century
16 cm x 12 cm
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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# 09

## MUMUYE FIGURE

Figure
Mumuye
Nigeria
20th century
Carved wood
Height: 99 cm
Provenance:
Ader-Picard-Tajan, « Arts Primitifs. Afrique – Océanie. Amérique du nord », Paris, Drouot, 16 June 1988, Lot 82
Loudmer, Paris, « Arts Primitifs », 14 May 1990, Lot 238
Philippe Ratton, Paris
Private collection, France
Sotheby's Paris, March 2021 lot 225
Private collection, Switzerland
Publication:
Mumuye Statuary, 2025
**TAS Exclusive price:** 9.500 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**
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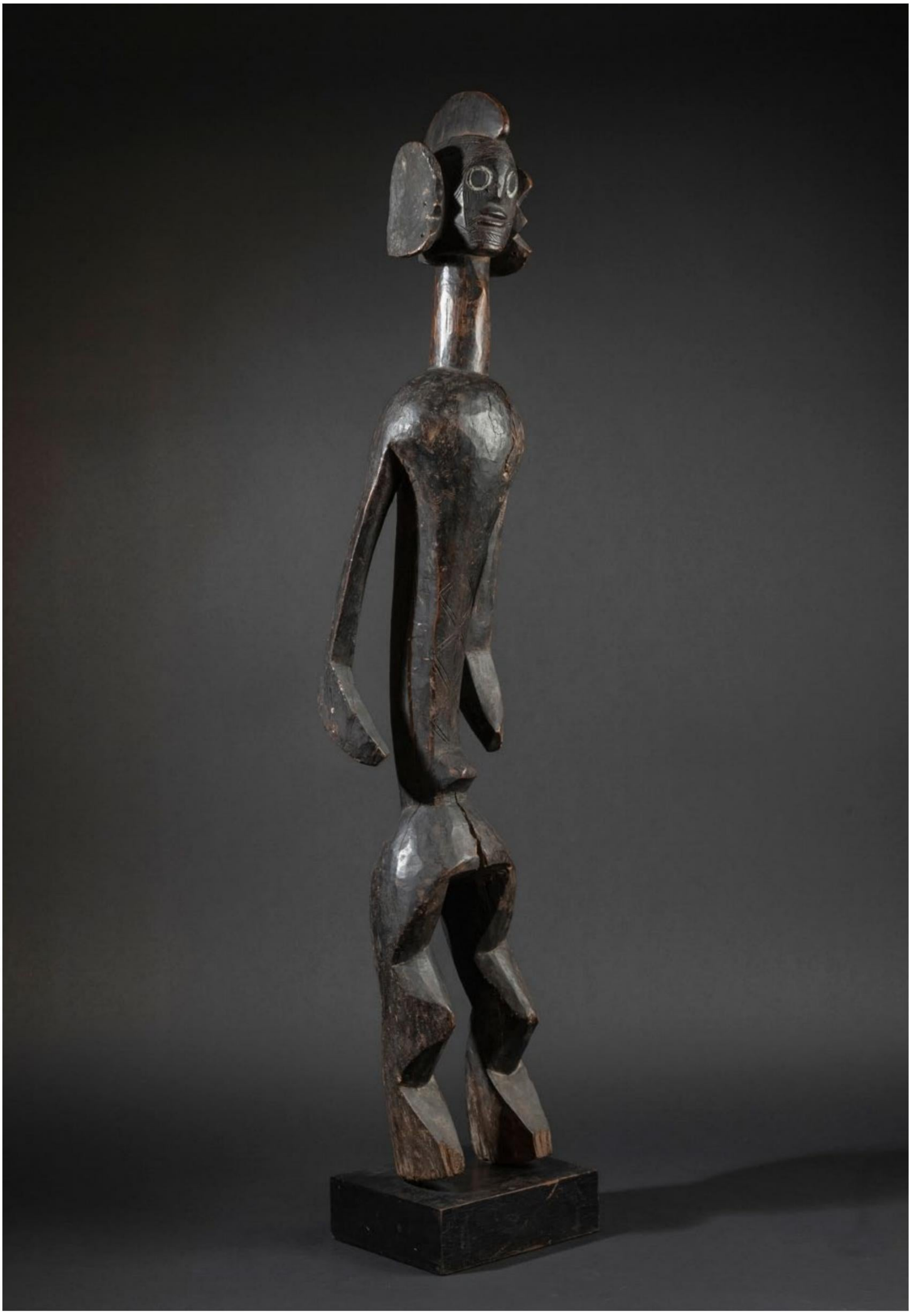
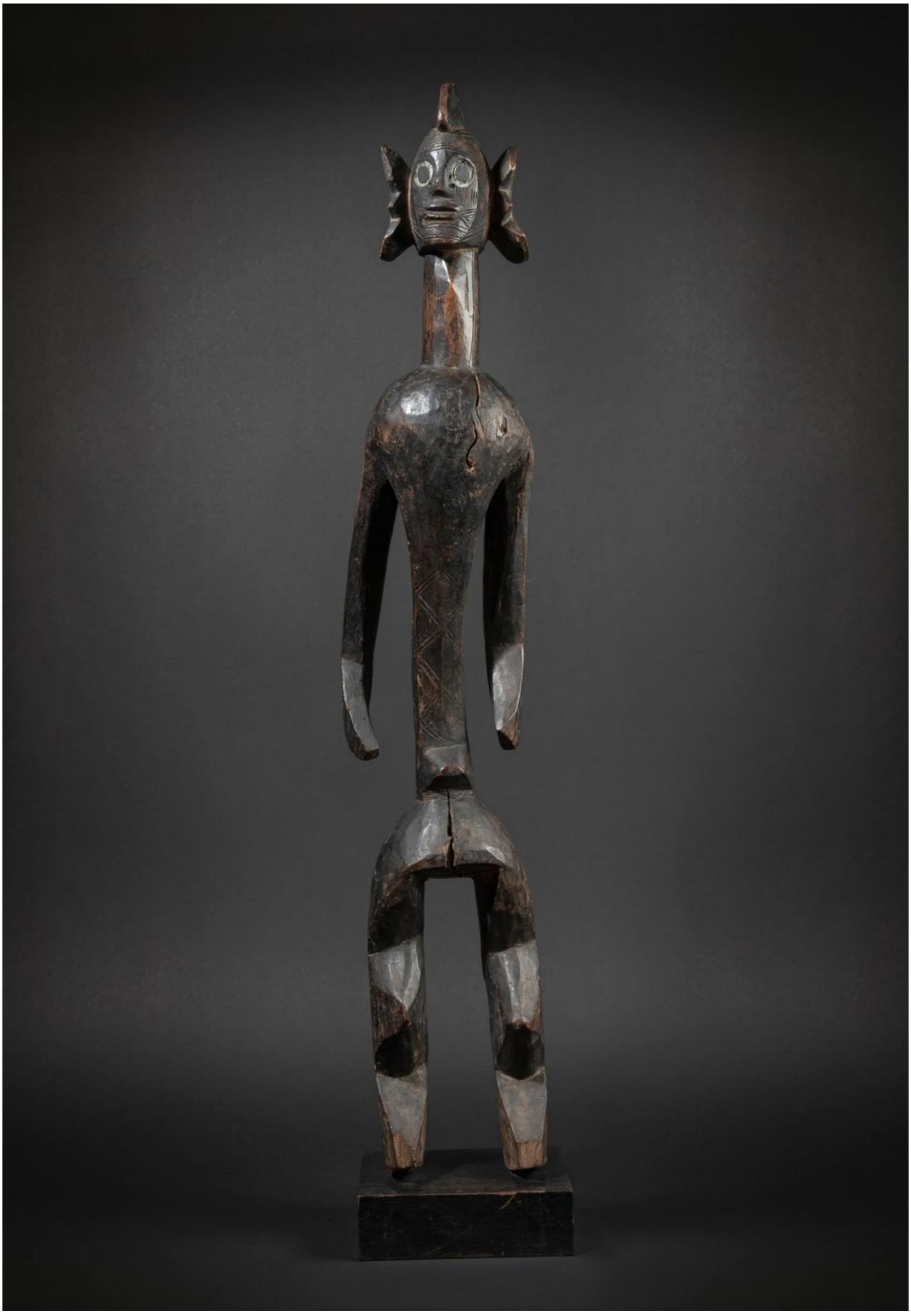
The Mumuye live in the foothills of the Shebshi Mountains near the banks of the Benue in eastern Nigeria. This agrarian people is comprised of three different dialectal groups, and was long unknown to Westerners, who discovered their art only in the late 1960s.

Mumuye rituals figures played a central role in ancestor worship and in curing ceremonies. They served as intercessors between the spirit world and that of men, and served as proof of the high status of the family that owned them.

This sculpture is part of a corpus of Mumuye statues known as the Nyavo style (named after a Mumuye artist from Pantisawa): the head resting on a long neck and topped with a central crest, large ears and disc-shaped eyes painted with white pigments and numerous scarifications on the face and torso.

According to Bernard De Grunne in Mumuye, 2023, "Arnold Rubin was fortunate to interview in October 1965 Nyavo who lived in the village of Pantisawa. Nyavo had begun carving in 1961 after studying under his father. The artist showed Rubin five works carved by him in a large variety of styles, ranging from sturdier, more compact style with long drooping earflaps, to taller, slimmer figures with elongated neck and large ears like flaring horns. (...) This style became quickly popular as six different sculptors carved in a similar manner. At least other twenty statues are known to display this characteristic stylistic detail of flaring trumpet-shaped ears whitened with kaolin. The popularity of this specific style may have been boosted by the fact that a statue by Nyavo entered the Musée de l'Homme in 1969 and was published very quickly a year later."





# 10

## NEPALESE MASK

Miniature Protective Mask
Nepal
Lingzhi Fungus
Early 20th Century or before
4 x 4 in (10 x10 cm)
Price on request

Kept in the home as a talisman to ward off malevolent ghosts

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# 11

## NGBANDI PIPE

A Rare Large African Wicker Pipe
Ngbandi
Zaire
19th century
Wicker, Terracotta (fired clay)
16cm (h.) x 38 cm (w.) x 7cm (depth)
Price on request

The 'Ngbandi' are an ethic group from the region of the upper Ubangi River, inhabiting the northern Democratic Republic of the Congo and the southern central African republic. The carefully braided 'outer' case protects the user whilst smoking the burning tobacco inside the 'terracotta' (clay) inner pipe. A fine patina and colour have developed on the wicker surface.

C F :
A very similar pipe is housed in the Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren, Belgium, Mus. Terv. 37.975

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Finch & Co
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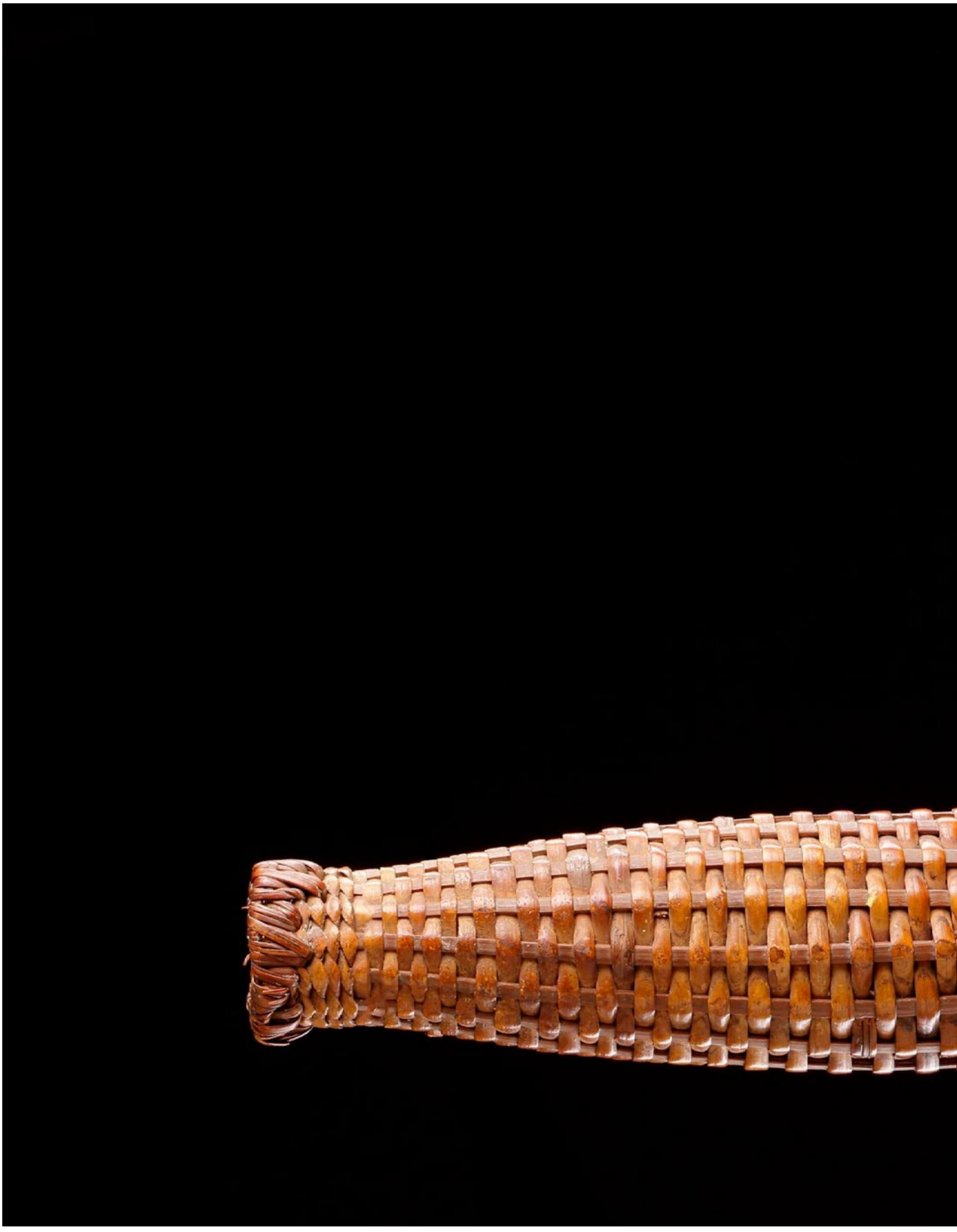
W.: www.finch-and-co.co.uk



# 12

## NIAS DIADEM

A delicate golden diadem of a Nias noblewoman 'saihogo' or 'sanifi'
South-Nias, Indonesia
19th century
Weight: 29 grams (15.5 ct)
Diam.: 16 cm x 5,5 cm (W. approx.), 20,5 cm (basket)
Provenance:
Erwin & Susanne Melchardt, Vienna
Publication:
*Nias, Tribal Treasures, Cosmic reflections in stone, wood and gold,* Delft 1990, p. 265, ill. 149 (ill.)
Achim Sibeth & Bruce W. Carpenter, *Nias Sculpture, Mandala Collection,* 2013, p. 233, v.09 (ill.)
Price on request

The surface of the thin, easily mouldable gold sheet is embossed with delicate geometric patterns. Depending upon the owner's status, complementary head ornaments may have been attached to the band. Including a fine wickerwork storage basket which seems to be original to the piece.

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# 13

## PAMINGGIR CEREMONIAL CLOTH

Ceremonial Cloth, palepai, with single blue ship
Paminggir people,
Kota Agung, Lampung, Sumatra, Indonesia
19th century
Cotton, silk, metallic-wrapped threads; supplementary weft
23 x 106 in (58, 5 x 269 cm)
Provenance:
Ex Elizabeth Pryce Collection, Sydney
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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Palepai were high prestige status markers displayed on the walls of clan houses at gatherings of chieftains, i.e. royal weddings.

We will never be able to know the deep meaning of the ship motif in Lampung.

A boat memorializing the migration by boat to the island of Sumatra by the first Austronesian speakers at least five thousand years ago?

Perhaps the boat recalls the ship motif with ancestors found on Dongson drums, traded in from Vietnam some two thousand years ago.

What we do know is that the graphics and deep color of this palepai make it a masterpiece.

# 14

## PUNU MASK

Tsangui mask
Punu
Gabon
19-20th century
Wood, Kaolin and natural pigments
Height: 26,5cm
Provenance:
Private collection, New York
Sol Levitt collection, New York
Alain Naoum, Brussels
Bernard Dulon, Paris
Published in:
McKesson (John), ""La Collection Levitt"", in Arts d'Afrique Noire, no.59, 1986:35
Price on request

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# 15

## SEPIK MASK

Miniature mask
Coastal Ramu, Lower Sepik, P.N.G.
Early 20th century
Carved wood and pigments
Height: 14 cm
Provenance:
Kirby Lewis, Lewis Wara Gallery, Seattle
Yann Ferrandin, Paris
Michael Auliso, California
Pierre Mondoloni, Marseille, acquired from the above in 2009
**TAS Exclusive price:** 6.500 euros

This Coastal Ramu River amulet mask probably served as a protective charm. Masks were omnipresent in the arts and cultures of the Sepik. Of extremely variable sizes (from a few centimeters to more than a meter high), they offer a seemingly unlimited range of shapes and colors.

Generally known by the term brag or brag sebug in the Lower Sepik, they represented powerful spirits. As Sir Michael Somare notes in "Sana", 1975, p. 29, *brag spirits gave a man power to fight, power to make peace, power to change people's minds, and power to attract women. They would weaken one's enemy, confuse his mind and make him vulnerable.*

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# 16

## TELLEM/DOGON SCULPTURE

Horse rider sculpture
Tellem / Dogon
Mali
12th century - 16th century
Iron
Height: 10,4 cm
Provenance:
Private collection, France
Price: 4.500 euros

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# 17

## TORAJA DOOR

Commemorative door
Toraja
Sulawesi, Indonesia
Early 20th century or before
Wood, Shell and metal
Height: 61 cm
Provenance:
Galerie Leloup, Paris
Marcel Marnat, France (acquired in 1984)
21/Ref. 0025
Price: 6.000 euros

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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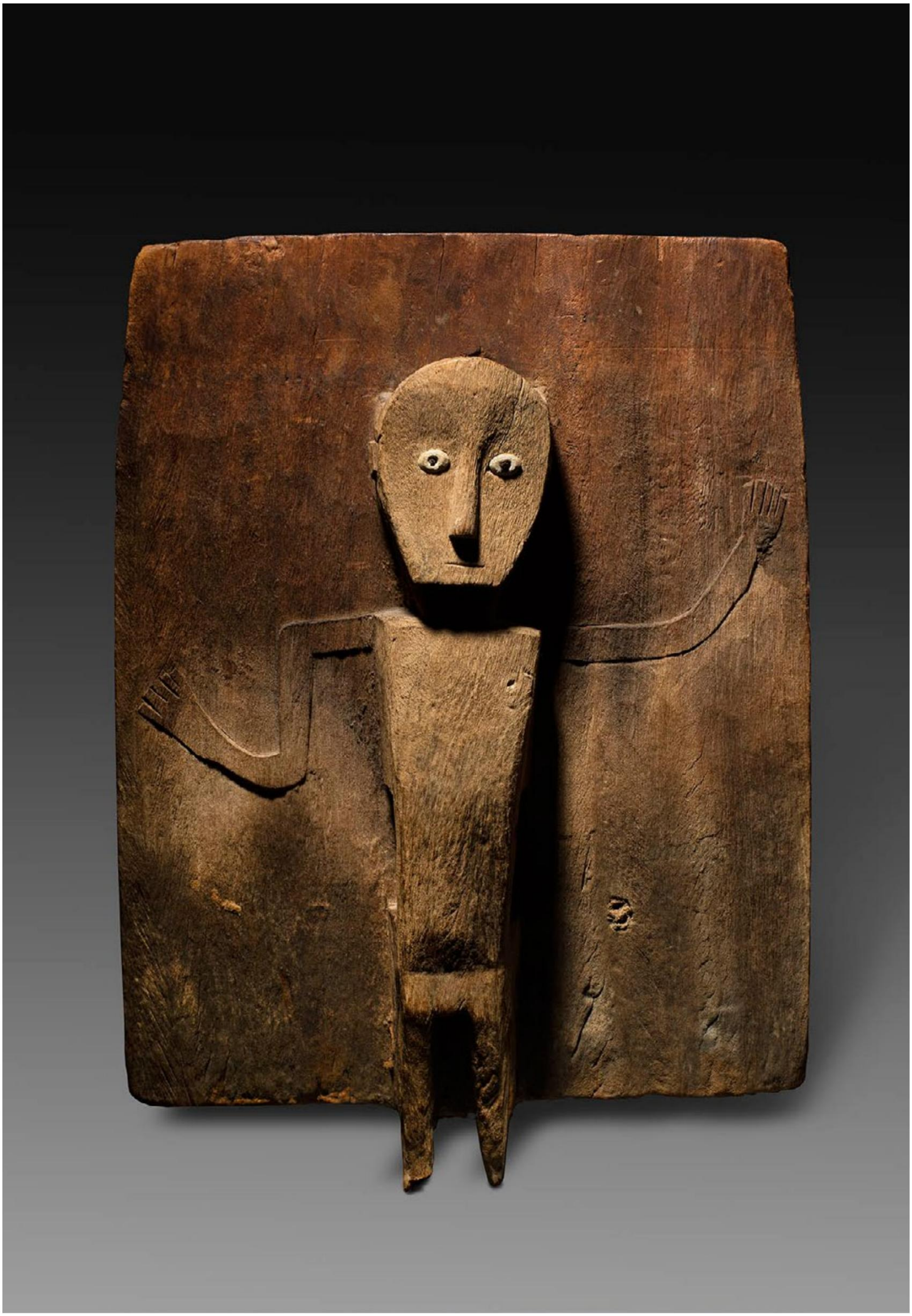

# 18

## TOTEM POLE MODEL

Miniature Totem Pole
Northwest Coast, Canada
20th century
Carved, painted wood
Height: 27 cm
**TAS Exclusive price:** 500 euros

This sculpture is the miniature version of a memorial pole, raised to honor a deceased shaman or chief. The depicted animals were important family crests associated with powerful tutelary spirits.

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# 19

## VANUATU CLUBS

A collection of clubs all with very good surfaces
Santo island, Vanuatu
19th century
The one to the far right has some restoration to the handle
Price on request

**OBJECT PRESENTED BY:**

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